1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

WEB OF FAMILY TIES

PARENTS AND CHILDREN

593 In general the attitude of the children towards their parents should be one of respect and obedience. Very early in his life a child must learn to act on the traditional norms of showing respect to different categories of people on the basis of their age and kinship status. The parents are entitled to the highest respect from the children; the latter must show it by touching their feet on ceremonial occasions. Between the father and the mother, the former symbolizes authority to a greater degree, while the constant association of the latter develops ties of sympathetic understanding between her and the children. Both must be respected, but of the two the father is feared much more. The mother is generally responsible for the upbringing of the children, but vigilance is also expected of the father, who must provide the corrective when too much leniency on the part of the mother begins to spoil the children. Of course the mother is responsible for the daily care of the children. She baths, clothes and feeds them. She looks after them during their illnesses. While she is doing her normal household work, she is expected to keep an eye on the children, and to ensure that they are kept away from mischief. Until they are about five years old, the life of the children centres around the mother. It is to her that they look for protection and help. 'When he is in a playful mood, the father may fondle the child; but it is the mother who attends to his daily routine.' 'The father,' it is said, 'loves the smiling child, but it is the mother who has to pacify it when it starts crying.'

● [858] The nature of the parent-child relationship changes with the age and status of the children. The traditional themes of correct treatment during infancy and early childhood are very different from those of childhood and adolescence. Similarly, when the sons and daughters enter the phases of youth and subsequently of adulthood, the tone of the parent-child relationship undergoes a significant modification.

593 842 Traditional opinion regards a son as an asset; a daughter, a liability. While a son 'belongs' to his parents, a daughter is bound eventually to go to some other family. Care of a daughter is regarded as 'watering a neighbour's tree'; you take all the trouble with it but its fruit goes to someone else. In a large family having many sons, a girl is definitely desired and welcomed. A family having too many daughters and no sons is unhappy, for a son is